

TURTON SCHOOL HISTORY DEPARTMENT – KNOWLEDGE ORGANISER – THE HOLOCAUST		
Key events	Key people	Key questions/words
<p>1935: In September, Nazi policy escalated. The Nuremberg Laws reduced Jews to second-class citizens because of their 'impure' blood. Defined by the religion of their grandparents rather than by their own beliefs, Jews were viewed as having impure blood lines. The new laws were taught in schools, cementing anti-Semitism in German culture.</p> <p>1937: Concentration camps began to incarcerate ‘habitual criminals’ in addition to political prisoners. Goebbels stepped up anti-Semitic propaganda with a traveling exhibition which cast Jews as the enemy.</p> <p>1938: In March, Germany invaded Austria and by September parts of Czechoslovakia too, drawing new territories under the regime of Nazi persecution. In November, attacks erupted against Jewish businesses. At least 91 Jews died and 267 synagogues were destroyed in a centrally coordinated plot passed off as spontaneous violence across Germany. Thousands of Jews were sent to concentration camps and were only released if they agreed to leave the Nazi territory. Many Jews decided to flee, though options were limited. Britain agreed to house Jewish children, eventually taking in 10,000 minors, but refused to change its policy for Jewish adults.</p> <p>1940: For the first time, camps were created specifically for Jews. Their conditions were far worse than other camps. The implicit intention was that the inmates would die there. Increasing numbers of Jews in Poland were relocated in ghettos. Non-Jewish Poles were also deported from their farms and villages to make room for ‘pure’ ethnic Germans to populate the new territory.</p> <p>1941: The Nazi policy on Jews moved from expulsion to containment to commanders being ordered to systematically murder the Jews of Europe. Methods of mass murder evolved at local levels as well as being decreed from Nazi high command. Killing squads rounded up and shot entire Jewish communities. Over two days in Kiev, 33,771 Jews were shot. The murder of Jews rapidly escalated, in part because local Nazi leaders didn’t have enough room to place them in the ghettos. By the end of the year, plans to implement the systematic slaughter of Jews by using gas in mobile trucks and gas chambers were well underway.</p> <p>1942: More Jews were murdered in 1942 than in any other year of the Holocaust, the majority in the newly created extermination camps.</p> <p>Of the 430,000 sent to the first death camp at Bełżec in Poland, there were only two survivors. 700,000 were killed at Treblinka in just five months. In July, Himmler ordered that all Jews in key areas of Poland, except for those needed for essential labour, were to be killed by the end of the year. Most were. Despite Allied intelligence receiving detailed reports of the mass murders in Europe, the public reaction in Britain was largely a mixture of apathy and disbelief.</p> <p>1943: Uprisings broke out in some extermination camps. The few remaining Jews kept alive to dispose of bodies and sort possessions realised the number of transportees was reducing and they would be next. Civilian uprisings occurred across Poland as mainly young Jews, whose families had already been murdered, began to resist Nazi oppression. With reports of rebellion and mass murder in the British press, the situation in the camps could no longer be ignored.</p> <p>1944: By March, the Allies were driving the German army back. Tens of thousands of Jews held in the eastern territories were marched towards the heart of Germany so they could not bear witness to the Allies. Aware that the world had been alerted to the horrors of the camps, the Nazis sought to destroy evidence. In June, Soviet forces liberated the first major camp, known as Majdanek, in Lublin, Poland. The Nazis had burned down the crematorium chimney but had failed to destroy the gas chambers and barracks. Only a few hundred inmates were still alive.</p> <p>1945: As the Allies swept to victory in Europe and camps were liberated across the once Nazi-occupied territories, the full scale of the Holocaust emerged. The Allies found camps that were catastrophically over-crowded with no food or sanitation. General Eisenhower ordered careful documentation of evidence by occupying troops as thoughts turned to justice. Hitler and other senior Nazis including Himmler and Goebbels killed themselves. In November, trials of captured Nazi leaders began at Nuremberg.</p> <p>1946: The international military tribunal delivered its verdict on 21 senior Nazi officials. 18 were found guilty and three were acquitted. 11 of Hitler’s deputies were given death sentences, including Goering, the most senior surviving Nazi. However he too committed suicide the night before he was due to hang. Others received prison terms. Albert Speer, Hitler's personal architect, was released in 1966 and spent his remaining years writing about the Nazi regime, donating most of his royalties to Jewish charities. Many Nazis evaded justice altogether and were never tried.</p>	<p>Adolf Hitler: The dictator sole leader of Germany and the Nazi Party. His anti-Semitic policies and racially motivated ideology resulted in the deaths of at least 6 million Jews, and millions of other people whom were deemed inferior.</p> <p>Heinrich Himmler: Controller of the SS, second in command of the Nazis. Himmler was one of the most powerful men in Nazi Germany and one of the persons most directly responsible for the Holocaust. As facilitator and overseer of the concentration camps Himmler directed the killings of six million Jews. Reinhard Heydrich was Heinrich Himmler’s chief lieutenant in the SS, and was chief of the security police. He played a key role in organizing the Holocaust during the opening years of World War II.</p> <p>Joseph Goebbels: Rose to power in 1933 along with Hitler and the Nazi Party and he was appointed Propaganda Minister. One of his first acts was the burning of the books. Throughout his tenure he organized attacks on Jews and remained with Hitler in Berlin to the end.</p> <p>Josef Mengele: Doctor who performed medical experiments at Auschwitz on camp inmates, including children he was called “Angel of Death”</p> <p>Eva Kor is a Holocaust survivor. Along with her twin sister Miriam, Kor was subjected to human experimentation under Josef Mengele at the Auschwitz concentration camp during World War 2. She lost both of her parents and two older sisters to the Holocaust; only she and Miriam survived. She has publicly forgiven the Nazis.</p> <p>Paul Oppenheimer: was a Holocaust survivor who was fortunate to survive for five years under the Nazis in Holland, and in the camps of Westerbork and Bergen-Belsen, and who finished up on ‘The Last Train from Belsen’. Upon his liberation Paul came to England and eventually would start to share his story about his former life, his childhood and the Holocaust.</p>	<p>Holocaust: The Holocaust was the systematic, bureaucratic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of six million Jews by the Nazi regime and its collaborators. <i>Holocaust</i> is a word of Greek origin meaning "sacrifice by fire."</p> <p>Anti-Semitism: Antisemitism is hostility to, prejudice, or discrimination against Jews. A person who holds such positions is called an antisemite.</p> <p>Persecution: hostility and ill-treatment, especially because of race or political or religious beliefs; oppression.</p> <p>Discrimination: the unjust or prejudicial treatment of different categories of people, especially on the grounds of race, age, or sex.</p> <p>Prejudice: preconceived opinion that is not based on reason or actual experience.</p> <p>Perpetrators: a person who carries out a harmful, illegal, or immoral act.</p>